

Security Alert: Baker Line, NAD Oahu; Waikele Branch
LCDR Mike Snyder, USN (ret)
May 2008

Some time after I had been at Waikele, probably in 1964 or 1965, GMT-2 Paul Hinkle and me (GMT-2 Mike Snyder) had some spare time to kill and decided to explore the innards of the admin tunnels inside the restricted area on Baker line. We checked out the keys from the plant office, walked over to Baker line, exchanged badges with the Marine sentry and went up to open the unalarmed tunnels. We opened the first tunnel, B1, and walked its length expecting to find some ancient treasure. There were a few old desks, some telephone sets, broken chairs and a lot of dusty junk, all neatly stacked on forklift pallets, that should have been tossed years before. We found no treasure worth taking to the plant or anything that piqued our personal interest. Back outside in the sun we closed and locked B1, climbed down off the loading dock and repeated the drill on B2 with the same result. In automatic, we proceeded to B3, unlocked the big doors using the same series keys that let us into B1 and B2 and walked inside. When we stepped around the recently installed sandbag barriers we gazed down a long row of double stacked B57's shining in the dim light of the explosion proof bulbs extending to the back of the tunnel. OOPS! One tunnel too far! We immediately exited B3, locked the doors and went back to dangle our feet over the edge of the B2 loading dock. We heard the sirens coming down the hill and knew we were under the surveillance of at least one tower rifleman and, of course, the sentry at the entrance to the restricted area. Sitting quietly and making no quick moves, we awaited the inevitable horror and mayhem we knew would be inflicted by the security alert team rushing toward us from topside. Two jeeps filled with armed Marines, one mounting a .50 caliber machine gun, roared through the gates and slammed to a stop in front of B3. They established a perimeter around the entrance to B3 and waited for the Marine duty security officer to arrive. Me and Paul were less than 50 feet from them in full view. The duty officer, who may have been a senior NCO, soon screeched to a stop, left his pickup truck and with an armed escort checked the security of the lock on B3. Finding it intact he checked the area and finding it clear ordered the Marines to secure. The whole parade blew out of the area as quickly as they had come. Throughout the entire event, not one person from the alert force, the Marine duty officer or the stationed sentry took note of us or asked us a single question. We were dumb-founded! Shaking our heads in disbelief and thankful for having escaped the expected rough treatment, Paul and I left the restricted area and trudged back to the plant where we reported what had happened to the Physical Security Officer whom I believe was CWO Egger at the time. I think he took up the issue with the Marine OIC, but we never heard anything more on the topic. It is possible that this incident was recorded by the very same security panel that is now part of the NNWA memorabilia.

Scramble Camp Pendleton! From Hawaii?!
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The Marine security force at Waikele consisted of the tower sentries, the restricted area sentries, one or more mobile roving patrols and the security alert team and back-up alert force. The mobile patrols were connected to the guard house by radio, the fixed position sentries by phone. The mobile Marine patrol call sign was "Heckler-Echo". About halfway through my tour at Waikele the call signs were suddenly changed from "Heckler-Echo" to another set of words. It seems that the tiny ¼ watt radio signal from our roving patrols had, on several occasions, successfully bounced all the way to Camp Pendleton in southern California where they were intercepted and interpreted as that base's security scramble code. We heard that Pendleton and gone to some level of alert as a result and were confounded by the whole thing. Our call signs were changed to avoid another such incident. I got that information from the senior civilian ammo transportation officer at Waikele who's first name was Bill, but his last name escapes me. He was a haole, (spelling?) not a Hawaiian.